

## **CLAIMS**

I claim:

1. A substantially rigid thimble adapted to extend up over the first knuckle position so as to assist the user in maintaining a substantially straight finger at the first knuckle position and having a needle contacting surface with one or more indents between the tip of the finger and a position adjacent or past the first knuckle position.
2. A substantially rigid thimble adapted to extend up over the first knuckle position of a user so as to form a close tolerance push fit over the first knuckle thereby bracing the knuckle against substantial bending; the thimble having a needle contacting surface with one or more indents between the tip of the finger and a position adjacent or past the first knuckle position.
3. A thimble in accordance with claim 1 hereof being open at both ends so that the tip of the finger is not covered.
4. A thimble in accordance with claim 1 hereof having a multiplicity of indents in the needle contacting surface; the indents extending between a position adjacent the tip of the finger and a position adjacent the first knuckle.
5. A thimble in accordance with claim 1 hereof being open-ended and between 20 and 45 mm in length.
6. A thimble in accordance with claim 1 hereof being open-ended and between 25 and 45 mm in length.

- 1      7. A thimble in accordance with claim 1 hereof wherein the inside of the front
- 2                face of thimble substantially flattened in order to assist in keying the thimble
- 3                to the finger thereby preventing rotation thereabout.
- 1      8. A thimble in accordance with claim 1 hereof wherein one or more of the inside
- 2                faces of the thimble are substantially flattened in order to assist in keying the
- 3                thimble to the finger thereby preventing rotation thereabout.
- 1      9. A thimble in accordance with claim 1 hereof which tapers inwardly along its
- 2                length as it extends towards the finger tip.
- 1      10. A method of quilting utilising a thimble in accordance with claim 1 hereof as a
- 2                brace in order to ensure that the first knuckle position of the thimble bearing
- 3                finger used to push the needle is not bent more than 25 degrees.
- 1      11. A method of quilting utilising a thimble in accordance with claim 1 hereof as a
- 2                brace in order to ensure that the first knuckle position of the thimble bearing
- 3                finger used to push the needle is not bent more than 15 degrees.
- 1      12. A method of quilting utilising a thimble in accordance with claim 1 hereof to
- 2                facilitate use of long needles with multiple stitches loaded thereon.